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PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

NAT PHIN.

IN a small villa, surrounded by a little garden, and sadly jostled by the spreading streets of Liverpool, dwelt a worthy old bachelor whom all the world knew by the familiar and handy name of Nat Phin. Mr Phin enjoyed a lucrative government office in the city, and spent six hours every day in business: all the rest of his time was devoted to study and recreation. He had, from his earliest years, manifested a taste for odd and out-of-the-way antiquities, to which was rather strangely joined a fondness for natural history. The first of these predilections he indulged in a small room connected with his office in town, where he had amassed an immense quantity of old historical jack-boots, and pistols, and china, and Indian gods, and other such trash, which he would sometimes be found surveying with one eye, while the other was watching the proceedings of a long vista of clerks in the neighbouring apartment. His other fancy found employment at home, where he had there stocked every room, and every bit of room, with books and objects connected with the various branches of his favourite science, or with creatures on which he had fixed those affections which other men devote to wife and children. A venerable spitfire terrier, which had been his companion at an early period of life, lay, mentally engaged in the business of rat-catching, in an old shawl of his aunt's, upon the parlour hearth. Two cats, only in a less degree ancient, having been Mr Phin's second love in the animal world, lay amicably beside the dog, with whom they had many years since come to a perfect understanding. A parrotlet occupied his pole and cross-beam in the corner. Three canaries and a siskin swung in cages from the ceiling. The windows were full of frames whereon were arranged multitudes of flowerpots, the products of which formed so thick a screen as almost to darken the room. The chimney-piece bore a weighty range of the more magnificent orders of shells; and a large glass case was completely filled with geological specimens. In the room more properly called his own, besides book-cases, there was a great variety of stuffed birds and beasts, and a few of the less amiable kinds of living creatures, which his aunt and housekeeper had with some difficulty prevailed upon him to keep out of the parlour. To make up for this, he had forced hundreds of other things into her room, on the plea that there was no place for them elsewhere. She had even submitted to accommodate a dried alligator, too long for all the other chambers in the house. But the things here specified are only those which would have fallen under the observation of a stranger at the first glance. Every bit of wall, most of the ceilings, and a great portion of the floors, were occupied with things living and things dead: there was a perpetual buzz, and mew, and chatter, and scream, and whistle, going on throughout the domicile. Beast called to beast, and bird to bird. A tame hawk contended with the favourite kitten for the crumbs of the breakfast-table; monkeys shook their fists and made faces at each other from opposite dens; and the parrot carried on a political controversy with the blackbird, the one having been taught to croak out "God save the king," while the other had been trained to sing "Over the water to Charlie."

Out of doors, every thing was on a similar footing. A little patch of garden, sunk amidst high walls, had in the course of time been filled in every corner with flowers and shrubs, indigenous and exotic, till it had become a perfect bower of beauty. Fruit-trees spread their arms along every inch of wall which the sun had any chance of touching; hotbeds, for which there was no room on the ground, were exalted on stilts, so as to form a kind of second floor; and hundreds, or rather perhaps thousands of flowerpots, were piled on

a frame in the middle, like a central bookcase in an over-filled library. Crowded as the place was, a small piece had been reserved for a pond, in which were kept a few zoophytes and aquatic plants, and where an old tame gull, whose usual employment was to keep down the breed of grubs, might occasionally wet his feathers. A long range of coops in a back court was devoted to a quantity of birds of what Mr Phin delighted to call the gallinaceous tribes, not one specimen of which belonged to Britain, or ever laid, as Miss Phin querulously remarked, a Christian-like egg; by which, we presume, she meant an egg that any Christian could eat.

The lord of this odd little domain was one of those individuals who advance to something like age, without having ever been young. At all times of his life, he had worn a stayed and studious look, as if he knew not what love, or quadrilles, or sentimental poetry, consisted of. He had taken to double flannels before thirty, and a wig at thirty-five, and had scarcely turned forty when he found it necessary to fence himself against the winter's cold by a brown duffle Spencer. His parents, who preceded him in the possession of the small villa, had seen him attain middle life, without ever supposing him to be any thing but a lad, or conceiving it to be in the least likely that Nat could form an attachment beyond the range of the family, or take it into his head to set up house for himself. Neither had any other body, young or old, male or female, ever thought of Nat as a person qualified to become a lover. He seemed to have entirely missed several of the seven ages of man, and become the lean and slippered Pantaloon at seventeen. If the idea of matrimony and the idea of Nat Phin could have been entertained at the same moment, it would have appeared a most incongruous association. No young lady, in her most meditative moments, whether in letting down her hair for a party, or twisting it up after, could have ever taken a thought of him; not even the most considerate mother of a large family of marriageable daughters could have allowed herself to imagine Nat making up to child of hers. He had not the this-world look which is required in the marrying man. More likely that he should gradually stiffen away into a curiosity, and, in proper time, take his place amongst those dried specimens upon which he at present bestowed so much of his affection.

There is no end, however, to the paradoxes of human character. Nat, with all his dryness and hardness of exterior, and engrossed as he seemed by his studies, possessed a soft and kind heart, and delighted in human intercourse. He was particularly fond of receiving visits from ladies, whom, with an antique formality, he would squire about his garden; and when his aunt gathered a few of those ornaments of creation around her tea-table, Nat shone out wonderfully, conversed on albums and theatricals, and, albeit long past the kettle-handing time of life, generally performed the offices of a beau with considerable alacrity. On occasions of this kind, there was generally a great deal of merriment; and all the more so, apparently, that the young ladies and Nat were innocent of all evil intention against each other. When he, in his turn, visited their houses, he was received rather as a kind and familiar uncle than as a mere acquaintance. Light-hearted girls would tell him their love-secrets, and ask his opinion of particular young gentlemen, and accompany him to the exhibitions of works of art, and employ him to obtain for them supplies of rice paper and address cards. In the presence of a man of likelihood, they would have been silent and reserved; but with honest Nat, who was never suspected of having a hand to offer, they were most unflatteringly at their ease.

At length, incredible as it may appear, Nat *did* marry. An eccentric young lady was taken one night by some female friends to see his garden, and being told that he was wealthy, good-natured, and not expected ever to quit the single state, she laid a bet that she would bring him to her feet. How she accomplished this end, has not been recorded; but it is certain that in less than two months she was Mrs Phin. It was summer when the happy event took place, and Nat was so far affected by the new feelings which possessed his bosom, as to assume a pair of nankeen trousers and a black silk handkerchief; things which, upon him, accomplished a change more considerable than could have been expected. On the day after the marriage, he left the bride to be initiated by his aunt in all the complicated arrangements of his establishment, and proceeded as usual to attend his professional duties. It never occurred to him that the lady could wish to reform, or alter, or expunge, any thing in his house; and he therefore had said nothing to her upon the subject. How great was his astonishment, when, on his return at four o'clock, he found the parlour nearly cleared of the pets and curiosities with which it was usually stocked—the terrier yelping from the coal-cellar, where it was dying of cold; the monkeys let loose in the garden, where they had brushed down, for one thing, fifty of the most magnificent dahlias; and the whole apartment wearing that waste and dishevelled look which is so apt to follow a thinning or removal of furniture. Nat stood aghast and speechless, and when he found his tongue, broke forth into a vehement denunciation of his venerable aunt as the cause of the mischief. Mrs Phin, however, soon set him to rights, by acknowledging herself to be the author of the reformation, which she defended manfully on the plea of expediency. "What!" said she; "am I to come home to a house like a cottar's cabin, with all kinds of birds and beasts in it? Why, Noah's ark was but a joke to it! No, no, sir; if you are to have a wife, you must allow her to manage her house for herself; the gentleman never interferes in household affairs." Nat gave in for the present, but spent the whole of that evening in re-arranging his trumpery, in consoling the offended feelings of the terrier, and reasoning with Mrs Phin about the pleasantness of having a few birds at least in one's parlour. He left her next morning, apparently reconciled to the existing state of things; but what was his astonishment, on coming home once more, to find that she had caused the whole of the honeysuckle to be cut away from the windows, and nearly a cartful of old pottery and bricks to be emptied into the pond among the zoophytes! These facts were hinted to him on his entrance, by his ancient gardener, whose heart seemed like to burst as he spoke. For some time, Nat hardly could find words. "Madam," he at length said, "you have spoilt one of the finest honeysuckles in the country, and destroyed at least fifteen unknown varieties of the Cellaria tribe of the class Zoophyta, besides some of the prettiest sea plants that ever were picked up. What in the name of wonder do you mean? Or where is all this to end?" "Why, to be sure," said the lady, "the room was a little dark, and I thought it could be improved by a few of the branches being cut away from the windows. As for the pond, it is full of the nastiest creatures in the world, and so I determined to have it filled up." "Nasty creatures!" cried the indignant husband; "they were admired by all students of zoophytology, as a perfectly unexampled collection. I had some intention of sending drawings of them to Lamarck, who, I have been told, is totally unacquainted with most of the species." The mischief, however, was done, and Mr Phin could

only use measures to prevent other disasters of the same kind. He accordingly spent the whole of that evening in lecturing his wife upon the pleasures of the study of natural history, and impressing upon her the identity of his comfort with the preservation of the objects with which he had filled his house. She yielded a kind assent to the most that he said; but the calm into which she thus lulled him was treacherous.

On returning to dinner next day, he was met in the very threshold with the sight of a vast mass of precious trumpery which he had kept in his own bedroom, now exclusively his own no longer; and again there was a thunderstruck stare, an angry inquiry, and a petulant answer. "What! shall a lady not see after the arrangement of her own room?" To increase the poignancy of his grief, he found her substituting a quantity of ladies' work—wretched compositions of card and colouring—trifles destitute of taste, utility, and every other valuable quality—for the inestimable specimens of animated nature, which it had cost him so many years to collect. Nat now began to fear that he had committed a great mistake, and that the happy days of his life were at an end. It was in vain that he entreated his aunt to preserve order in his absence; the old lady, not very well pleased with the marriage, and not on over-friendly terms with Mrs Phin, declared herself totally unable to interfere. Day after day did he come home to some new scene of desolation and change, and night after night did he spend in bewailing his lot. On some occasions, it was a glass case demolished and thrust into the lumber-room; on others, a favourite bird liberated, or a plant rooted up. A marmoset with a young family was packed out of doors, to take her chance, like a child-laden beggar, of a wayside subsistence; and a sloth was put to his top speed, to avoid a fire of damp straw which Mrs Phin kindled in pure fun under his kennel. Dahlias and fuschias of the highest excellence were broken off to make nosegays; and the coops of the gallinaceous tribes being left open by intentional mistake, seeds of the greatest rarity and value would sometimes go as a single meal to those insatiable peckers and scrapers. In about a twelvemonth, such a change was wrought in the house, garden, and person of Mr Nathaniel Phin, that no one who had known them in former days could have recognised them. The house was a dismantled toy, the garden a desolated bower, and the man himself a worn-down human existence—a withered leaf shivering, the last of its tribe, in the November blast—a being apparently not long for this world.

The time, however, at length arrived for the restoration of Nat to comfort. A baby daughter, presented to him one fine morning, opened a new train of affections in his heart, and soon engrossed so much of his attention, that he began to lose all regard for his curiosities. He ceased to look after his garden, helped with his own hands to banish a chest of dried moths in order to make way for a cradle, and in a short time became quite a different man. Further additions, which in time were made to his family, completed and confirmed the alteration. He discovered that the things to which he had formerly devoted himself were mere substitutes for those more delightful objects which he now found it so much more agreeable to fondle; and that, these having been placed within his reach, the others were worse than useless. He therefore consented to reserve only a portion of his garden for ornamental purposes, the rest being devoted to rearing honest useful vegetables. His foreign gallinacea were exchanged for worthy regular English hens, whose eggs were generally eatable. His wife was allowed to make such alterations in his house, as rendered it a comfortable family mansion, instead of a menagerie and museum; and by the same magic hands various reformations were made in his own person, so as to transfigure him from a dried specimen into a very tolerable middle-aged gentleman. Nat finally became a solid, easy, contented-looking family man, regularly squiring his wife to church, and frequently to be seen walking on an evening with his "boys." He spent many happy years in this manner, and the last time we saw him he confessed that all his bachelor and curiosity-collecting days seemed to have been spent in vain, and that now only did he truly enjoy life.

VEGETABLE AND MINERAL POISONS.

CONTINUING the subject of vegetable poisons, one of the most deadly which comes under our notice is that which is found in fungi, or the tribe of mushrooms. Accidents arising from these are of frequent occurrence; yet not so frequent here as upon the Continent, because, in Britain, only three species of mushrooms are used, while abroad, a great variety of them have found their way to the table, many of which are not only liable to be confounded with poisonous species, but are even themselves of doubtful quality. Mr Miller tells us that the true eatable mushroom, *Agaricus campestris*, may be easily distinguished from poisonous or unpleasant species by the following characters:—"When young, it appears of a roundish form, smooth like a button; which, together with its stalk, is white, especially the fleshy part of the button; the gills within, when broken, are livid. As it grows larger, it expands its head by degrees into a flat form; the gills underneath are at first of a pale flesh colour, but become blackish on standing." The species used by us are the truffle, the

common mushroom, and the morelle; there are, however, upwards of forty species in the island, out of which Dr Greville, one of the most distinguished botanists in Britain, enumerates no fewer than twenty-six different species growing abundantly in our woods and fields, which, although most of them utterly neglected in this country, are all of them considered eatable, and many highly delicate, abroad. General directions have been laid down for distinguishing the esculent from the poisonous kinds; but it is very questionable if these rules are always safe; and certainly they are not always accurate, as they would exclude many species in common use on the Continent. It appears, however, that most fungi or plants of this description, which have a warty cap, more especially fragments of membrane adhering to their upper surface, are poisonous. Heavy fungi, which have an unpleasant odour, especially if they emerge from a *cupes* or bag, are also generally hurtful. Of those which grow in woods and shady places, a few are esculent, but most are unwholesome; and if they are moist on the surface, they should be avoided. All those which grow in tufts or clusters upon the trunks or stumps of trees, ought likewise to be shunned. A sure test of a poisonous fungus is an astringent, styptic taste, and perhaps also a disagreeable, but certainly a pungent odour. Some fungi possessing these properties have indeed found their way to the table; but they are of very questionable quality. Those whose substance becomes blue soon after being cut, are invariably poisonous. Those of an orange or rose colour, and those of a coriaceous or corky texture, or which have a membranous collar round the stem, are also unsafe. Even the esculent mushrooms, if they are partially devoured by insects, and have been abandoned, should be avoided, as they have in all probability acquired injurious qualities which they do not usually possess. There is great difficulty in laying down any rules by which poisonous fungi can be distinguished by those not intimately acquainted with botany; and there is still greater difficulty in forming, even for the botanist, a correct list of those which are poisonous, because certain species are innocent in one climate and poisonous in another; and not only this, but their qualities are considerably influenced by a dry or rainy season, and the period of the year at which they are produced. Rules may serve as useful guides, but they must not be implicitly relied upon, for all are subject to exceptions. It may be well to mention that there is a peculiarity attending this class of poisons, in so far as the symptoms are slow in beginning and of unusually long duration. They have not, in some instances, commenced for twelve, and in several they have lasted for more than forty-eight hours.

No antidote or specific remedy is known where poisoning from mushrooms has taken place. Several have at different times been confided in; but none are of any material service. In all cases, the first object should be to evacuate the offensive matter by emetics; and we would have our readers bear in mind that a teaspoonful of mustard dissolved in a tumbler of warm water is a powerful emetic in every body's possession. After which, stimulants, especially hartshorn or strong coffee, will be found highly serviceable. Among the more deadly vegetable productions of our country is the foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), which,

With modest blush in bosky dells,
Hangs her dewy purple bells;
So softly nodding in the breeze,
The blossoms seldom fail to please;
But woe to him who rashly sips
There's poison on her glowing lips!

And fearful indeed are the consequences which often arise from eating of the plant, the properties of which are of a very powerful and peculiar kind. The leaves are the most active part. The foxglove is a favourite nostrum among quack doctors, and became the ground of a criminal trial of one in London in 1826. When will people be aware of their folly in trusting their lives in the hands of empirics! The hellebore or Christmas rose, which, though

Triumphant over winter's power,
And sweetly opening to the sight,
'Midst chilling snows, with blossoms fair,
Of pure and spotless white—

is still fraught with death and desolation to those who, tempted by its apparent purity, imprudently feed upon it. Though not now used in medicine, the hellebore is a very interesting plant on account of the esteem in which it was held by the ancients as a remedy for madness; so considerable indeed was this, that helleborism, or the methods of preparing the patient for its administration, formed an essential part of their therapeutics. Its purgative qualities may perhaps afford the reason why they used it, even when there was no prior disorder, in order to add strength and vigour to the mental conceptions. Valerius Maximus tells us that Carneades, the philosopher, when he was engaged in a dispute with Chrysippus, always prepared himself by a dose of it; and that the success of it was such as made all who were desirous of solid praise to follow his dangerous example.

Laurel leaves, and the meadow saffron, are also poisonous productions; and the monkshood, or purple aconite, which grows in almost every garden, is to be dreaded. Belladonna, or deadly nightshade, "the insane root which takes the reason prisoner" of Macbeth; tobacco; hyoscyamus, or henbane, by which, according to Shakspeare, the King of Denmark was

poisoned; and hemlock, which is generally believed to have furnished the poisons which were used in ancient times, and especially among the Greeks, for dispatching criminals, and so often mistaken for fennel, asparagus, parsley, and particularly parsnip, often become the ministers of death to the unwary. The water hemlock, too, *Cicuta virosa*; the dead-tongue, or hemlock dropwort, *Eranthis crocata* of botanists, often mistaken for hemlock by collectors of medicinal vegetables, a mistake of serious consequence; and another of the umbelliferous tribe of plants, the fool's parsley, *Ethusa cynapium*, which has often occasioned accidents by reason of its resemblance to parsley—from which, however, it is at once distinguished by the leaves being black, and glistening on their lower surface, and by the nauseous smell they emit when rubbed—often prove fatal when introduced into the stomach. But among the vegetable poisons, opium, with its preparation of laudanum, is the most common and the most destructive, being frequently administered in a poisonous dose either by accident or design. And here, as indeed with all those which we have enumerated, our first object must be to remove the poison from the stomach, and, in the absence of the medical man, an emetic furnishes the readiest means. When it is to be obtained, the best is the sulphate of zinc, in a dose of half a drachm, which, if it fails to act, may be repeated after a short interval. When the poison, as in laudanum, is of a narcotic nature, our next endeavour must be to keep the patient constantly roused; and the best method is to drag him up and down between two men, who must be cautioned against yielding to his importunate entreaties and occasional struggles to get free and rest himself. If the emetic is about to fail in its effect, cold water dashed upon the head restores the patient for a few moments to sensibility, during the continuance of which it will probably operate. In our endeavours to rouse the patient, stimulants, as hartshorn, camphor, musk, or strong coffee, &c. will be beneficial.

Although we have not mentioned all the vegetable poisons, we have, we think, said enough to afford such information about them as may be useful in time of need, and the absence of the medical man, if it is not enough to warn persons against using unknown plants.

We shall not occupy much time with the mineral poisons; because the subject is one, concerning which, without an extensive knowledge of chemistry, it were impossible to become so sufficiently acquainted as to do more than render a little assistance in the absence of the scientific practitioner. That little, however, may be useful, and therefore we shall devote a short space to the consideration of those more common mineral poisons which are sometimes taken accidentally and by mistake for other substances.

The first mineral poison we may notice is oxalic acid, which is often and fatally swallowed for Epsom salts, which it so closely resembles, that it is difficult even for the practised eye to point out which is the laxative and which the poison. Many plans have been proposed for effectually distinguishing between the two, but the safest one is to taste the draught before taking it—the poison is very acid, while the Epsom salt is strongly bitter. Another test is to take a little common writing ink, and drop it on one or two of the suspected crystals. If they be Epsom salts, no alteration will occur; but if oxalic acid be present, the ink will become of a reddish brown; and, again, blue sugar-loaf-paper is reddened by a solution of the acid, but not affected by the salts.

Oxalic acid is little adapted for the murderer; for although easily given as a laxative, its real nature so soon betrays itself, that secrecy is effectually prevented. It seems to be the most rapid and unerring of all the common poisons. Cases are recorded where patients lived scarcely ten minutes; and few of those who have died survived one hour. The smallest dose seems to have been half an ounce; but there can be little doubt that less would be sufficient to cause death. It is too evident, that on account of its dreadful rapidity, remedies are of little avail, unless resorted to immediately after the acid has been swallowed; and the strongly burning sensation it occasions in the throat and stomach almost instantaneously indicates what has happened. The object then in view is to administer as speedily as possible large doses of chalk, or magnesia, if chalk cannot be easily procured. These substances not only neutralise the acid, so as to take away its corrosive power, but form with it a new compound, which is insoluble, and therefore unable to enter the system. Time should never be lost in exhibiting emetics; but, above all, it is necessary to avoid giving warm water in hopes of accelerating vomiting, as dilution promotes the entrance of the poison into the blood, if it has not the effect of immediately expelling it.

Where oil of vitriol (*sulphuric acid*), or spirits of salt (*muratic acid*), have been swallowed, in the absence of the medical man large doses of the common carbonate of magnesia are to be given, and vomiting promoted with hot water; and if these cannot be procured, a solution of soap must be given. And here we would most earnestly caution mistresses of families where there are children, never to allow their housemaids to leave exposed for an instant the bottles of the mixture with which they clean their grates. This composition is formed with powerful acids; and a child is very apt to put the bottle to its mouth and drink from it. We are acquainted with a fatal case

of this nature which occurred lately. Nitre, or saltpetre, has sometimes been taken instead of Glauber salts; but it is seldom fatal. Emetics, mucilaginous drinks, and milk, are to be had recourse to.

There are several preparations of arsenic, all of which are highly deleterious when taken even in very small quantities. Unfortunately we have no antidotes to neutralise the effects of this poison, and hence vinegar, sugar, butter, and other oily substances, lime water, bitter decoctions, and many other things, once vaunted as antidotes, are now justly forgotten. The Continental papers tell us that two Swedish physicians have lately discovered the oxide of iron to be an antidote for arsenic; but until this is fully established as a fact, our sole dependence must be upon emetics—sulphate of zinc, if possible—and compelling the patient to drink plentifully, both before and after vomiting, of milk, which appears to be the best substance for enveloping the powder, and so promoting its discharge.

Corrosive sublimate, and other mercurial preparations, are very energetic poisons; but here we possess, what is so much wanted in arsenic, a convenient and effectual antidote, viz. the white of eggs. The following extract from Professor Christison's work on poisons fully illustrates this fact:—"Twelve grains of corrosive sublimate were given to a little dog, and allowed to act for eight minutes, so that its usual effects might fairly begin before the antidote was administered. The white of light eggs was then given; and after several severe fits of vomiting, the animal became apparently free from pain, and in five days was quite well. According to Peschier, the white of one egg is required to render four grains of the poison innocuous. Its virtues have also been put to the proof in the human subject with equally favourable results; numerous cases are recorded of its success, and a few years ago it was the means of saving the life of Mons. Thenard, a distinguished chemist. While at lecture, this gentleman inadvertently swallowed, instead of water, a mouthful of a strong solution of corrosive sublimate; but having immediately perceived the error, he sent for the white of eggs, which he was fortunate enough to procure in five minutes. He suffered no material harm, and without the prompt use of the antidote, he would almost infallibly have perished."

Sugar of lead (*acetate of lead*), and Goulard's extract (*subacetate of lead*), are sometimes taken accidentally; and here the phosphate of soda is an excellent antidote, as also Epsom salts. If the patient does not vomit, it will be necessary to make him do so by giving an emetic of the sulphate of zinc. Many diseases are caused by this metal; lead-miners, smelters, painters, glaziers, and others who employ it in their work, are all likely to be seriously affected by it; but all this would not accord with our purpose were we to enter into it. Perhaps, also, it would be better were we to delay our observations upon the effect of lead upon water until we treat of the adulterations of food; but, nevertheless, we shall now shortly allude to that subject. Most spring waters have little or no action upon lead; the Edinburgh water is an example of this; and the leaden cisterns and pipes used in that city are perfectly innocuous. All springs, however, unfortunately, are not similarly situated, and thus very fatal cases are recorded of persons who have been poisoned by drinking spring water which had been kept in leaden reservoirs. Should water contain a minute quantity of certain saline matter, though kept in contact for any length of time with lead, it is perfectly harmless; but all salts are not equally efficacious. Dr Christison has demonstrated that complete protection is afforded by 1-2000th of muriate of soda (common salt), 1-4000th of sulphate of soda, and 1-27,000th of phosphate of soda. But even the spring water which has no sensible action upon lead, may acquire the capability of acting on it by substances which may have been received into it, such as leaves, for instance; and hence the necessity of keeping leaden cisterns very clean; and also a reason why rain or river water should not be kept in such reservoirs. But, on the whole, there can be no doubt that the mode of preserving water intended for food or drink in leaden cisterns is highly improper; although, as we have said, pure water exercises no sensible action upon lead, yet the metal is certainly acted upon when air is mixed with it. The white line which may be seen at the surface of water so preserved, and where the air is in contact with it, is a carbonate of lead, formed at the expense of the metal; and this substance, when taken into the stomach, is highly deleterious. This was the reason which induced the ancients to condemn, and in some cases even to forbid, leaden pipes for the conveyance of water; and it would be occasionally well if their practice was in these days adopted.

Sulphate of potash, or sulphate of soda, is a delicate test for detecting minute portions of lead. Dr Thomson discovered, by means of it, one part of lead in 100,000 parts of water. It produces a cloudy appearance in the water if lead be present. Wines are sometimes adulterated by lead; but of this we shall speak when we come to that subject.

Poisoning with copper was formerly of common occurrence; it even now sometimes occurs, in consequence of the metal being much used in the fabrication of vessels for culinary and other domestic purposes, or ignorantly resorted to in order to impart a good colour to sweetmeats and preserves. It seems indeed to have been at one time the custom to make a point

of adulterating pickles with copper; for in many cookery books, the cook is told to put a few halfpence among them, in order to produce a fine green colour! To prevent accidental impregnations, copper vessels are usually tinned; yet this, too, is but a partial protection, as the tinning is apt to be worn away without attracting the attention of servants; and hence the use of both copper and brass utensils in the kitchen is becoming every day more and more limited, especially since the manufacture of cast-iron vessels has been brought to such perfection. The symptoms caused by copper in man, are, in a general point of view, the same as those occasioned by arsenic or corrosive sublimate—obstinate and severe colic, retching and vomiting, costiveness, flatulency, burning pain at the pit of the stomach, in the loins and extremities, and paralytic weakness in the arms; a peculiarity, however, exists in a coppery taste in the mouth. Here again the white of eggs is the best antidote.

We have thus concluded our rapid sketches of the more common poisons derived from the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, and detailed the method of treatment to be adopted if no medical man is present; and should any of our readers be in a situation requiring the exercise of the means of relief we have pointed out, we trust we have done so in a manner so clear and lucid, that little difficulty can attend any one possessing a cool and unembarrassed understanding in his endeavours to put them into execution.

STORY OF CAPTAIN X—

[BY THE AUTHOR OF TRAITS OF TRAVEL.]*

DURING my career of service I have met with numbers of brave men, and a few cowards. I have seen courage and fear display themselves in various ways, and many modifications; but I never met with but one instance of a thorough mixture of audacity with poltroonery, of the basest faint-heartedness with presence of mind.

On joining the regiment to which I exchanged, for the sake of serving in Spain, the very first of my brother officers to whom I was presented by the major commanding, was the captain of the company to which I was attached. I never was so prepossessed in favour of any one at first sight. He was a fine handsome young man, of most elegant address, full of ready wit, and apparently burning with military ardour. He was a prodigious favourite in the regiment. Nothing could exceed his attentions to me, except the pains which he took to instil a portion of his own gallant spirit into mine.

The first time I went into action with this new regiment, Captain X— was unfortunately taken ill, just before our brigade was ordered to advance. He was obliged to let me lead on his company, and his regret made a deep impression on me. It appeared to me that he suffered more mental anguish than bodily, even though, I think, he specified his being desperately ill in three places.

After we had succeeded in driving the enemy from a strong redoubt, the captain joined us, in great spirits and good health, all his spasms having given way to some violent habitual remedy, which he told me was either "kill or cure" with him. He almost wept at finding that the fighting was all over.

We had several smart skirmishes soon after this affair. Captain X— was often in the field, but I never happened to see him through the smoke, except on one occasion, when he showed great tact in the use of a pocket-glass, with which he constantly looked out from behind a tree or a mound of earth, and gave orders with great coolness to me and the other subalterns, to advance and retreat as occasion required.

In a storming business, when I was detached with a few men, a serious accident was near happening to Captain X—. As soon as the place was taken, and I returned to the regiment, I received a pressing request to repair immediately to him, as he feared he was at his last gasp—dreadfully wounded. I ran to his quarters, in a house just under the rampart, to which he had crawled; and I picked up the surgeon of the regiment on my way, forcing him to abandon some other patients to give his whole attention to my friend. We found him lying on a mattress, almost insensible.

"What has happened? where are you hit, my dear X—?" said I.

He could not speak, but placed his hand on his side.

"Let me examine you, Captain X—," said the surgeon. "I have not a minute to lose; we have many others wounded—officers and men."

"Ah, my dear doctor, are you there?" said the sufferer, opening his eyes for the first time. "How kind this is!—but never mind me—hurry off to my poor fellow-soldiers—it is of little matter what becomes of me—I am too far gone for help—I am a dying man—yet you need not exactly say 'killed' in your report; I don't wish to shock my friends too suddenly. Merely put me down 'dangerously wounded.'"

"What is your wound, sir? Of what nature, I ask you again?"

"It must, I think, have been a cannon shot—I feel my side almost battered in—that is to say, a *spent* shot."

* This amusing sketch being copied from a collection of pieces, we are sorry we are unable to give the name of the publication in which it originally appeared.

"Is there any mark?" "Why, no—no—not decidedly a mark—I cannot say there is a direct contusion; it might have been, in fact, the wind of a twelve-pound shot, or something of that kind—you may, in short, put me down (to save the feelings of others, very dear to me) you may put me down 'slightly wounded.'"

"Why, really, Captain X—?" "Not a word, not a word, my worthy friend—off to your duty—go, go along—you must put me down 'slightly'—whatever you like, in short—something—any thing—only pray let my name be in the list of the wounded! Not another word—good bye, good bye, my dear, my very dear doctor!"

The doctor smiled, as bitterly as though he had just swallowed a dose of rhubarb. He left the place; and to my infinite surprise, and that of the whole army, I may say, the London Gazette, which some weeks after brought us the official account of the storming, showed us the unprecedented notification, in the list of casualties, of Captain X—being "very slightly" wounded. He was the only individual of the regiment who was not thoroughly ashamed of this, and who did not feel the actual cautery of the surgeon's printed sarcasm.

I now began to know my man, and was not much surprised, at the night attack on a fortress soon after, to hear myself called loudly from the head of the company (I occupying my post in the rear, as we advanced in subdivisions to the breach), by Ned Flanagan, of Galway town, Captain X—'s covering serjeant—"Mr Hartigan, Mr Hartigan! Come up, come up, quick, and lade the company—the captain's run away already."

Every one knows what a hot affair Fuente d'Onore was—but no one took it so coolly as Captain X—. The village had been taken and retaken several times, till a final charge, in which our regiment bore a part, drove the enemy out, and left us in possession of the place. As we forded the river, in close column of companies, Captain X— quietly slipped behind, and took up a position among the rubbish of an old house, which afforded him a fine view of the business. The colonel, by whom we were that day led on, a Scotsman, who was by hereditary right as brave as a lion, turned round suddenly to the adjutant, and asked him, "Where is Captain X—?"

"Hiding under that wall, sir," answered the adjutant, pointing to the reconnoiterer.

"That's too bad!" exclaimed the indignant colonel. "Gallop up to him—at him—over him—and if he does not rejoin the regiment instantly, cut him down on the spot!" The adjutant rode fiercely up to him, and hurriedly repeated the orders he had received.

"Nay, nay, my good friend," said X—, "what's the use of being so confoundedly hasty? Just let me say a few words in explanation. May I die, my dear friend, if—"

"Die and be hanged!" abruptly uttered the adjutant, putting spurs to his horse, and dashing back to his post, where he had scarcely arrived, when a musket shot through both his cheeks tumbled him to the ground, and put an end to his gallant conduct for that day.

As soon as we were thoroughly in for it at Salamanca, when the grape-shot began to pepper the head of the column, and the men dropped right and left, an officer of ours was seen to throw himself boldly into a dry ditch; and those who could not distinguish who it was, thought we had another brave fellow knocked over. But those who identified Captain X— were quite satisfied that he was in safe quarters. As soon as the business of that hard-fought day was well and thoroughly done, we had ceased firing, and were charging after the broken enemy, when an officer was dimly observed through the smoke that was clearing off, about fifty yards in front of our line, waving his hat with its long streaming feather, in one hand, and flourishing his sword in the other, cheering on the regiment, with shouts of most vociferous valour. A roar of laughter burst along the line, and became particularly loud when our company joined in it, for we soon recognised our resuscitated captain, and knew better than any others how to appreciate his prowess.

But his best, and, poor fellow, it was his last exploit, occurred not long after this, at the siege of a place memorable for the determination of its defence, as well as the vigour with which it was attacked and carried.

The approaches of the English army were pushed on with a frightful proximity to the place: so much so, that the guns from the bastions were fired point blank at individual officers and men, who had the temerity to raise their heads above the trenches; and they were often hit from cannon of large calibre, with as dead a certainty as though the most unerring sharpshooters had levelled at them with rifles.

Our entire company was ordered down from the camp, on a working party, one fine morning, out of our turn of duty, and not a little to our surprise, to replace another which had taken its place in the trenches during the night, but was almost annihilated soon after daybreak, by the terrible cannonade from the enemy's works. One of our subs was killed the day before, so that Captain X— had but myself and the ensign, a gigantic Kerryman of about twenty years old, and six feet five inches high, under his command. We were under cover as soon as we came within range

of the enemy's guns; and so hot was the fire, that not one of us felt disposed to despise the captain's example of keeping as close as possible.

There were several small redoubts thrown up along the trenches, from which elevations the officers on duty could keep a sharp eye on the men at work. I stepped or rather crept into one of these, to relieve the last surviving officer of the company we replaced. He was in the act of eating a crust of bread, which his servant had procured him for breakfast; and as he was leaving his post to my occupation, he incautiously raised his head, to look at the hostile ramparts, when it was carried clean away by a twenty-four pound shot, and the body knocked several yards out of the redoubt.

These were not pleasant occurrences for any man's comfort, but least of all so to one of Captain X's temperament. I was scarcely settled in the redoubt, when I saw him moving towards me along the trench, stooping much lower than the utmost prudence required; and he soon came crawling into the redoubt, requesting me to change places with him, and take the command of the whole party, as he wished much to sketch the bastions of the fortress; and he took out his sketch-book and pencil for the purpose. I could not refuse his request, a most unlucky one for him; for had he staid where his duty required, he had most probably escaped the catastrophe which ensued.

I had not changed places with my captain five minutes, and had just stepped up on the ridge of the trench where the soldiers worked, to look about, as it was my duty from time to time to do, when the general of the day galloped up, attended by two aides-de-camp, and a couple of orderly dragoons. He was one of the bravest of the brave; too brave, indeed, as was proved by his death not long after, on a distant service unworthy of his fine talents. He, too, was an Irishman, and knew our regiment well.

"Who commands this party, Mr Hartigan?" asked he. "I do, sir," answered I.

"There is a whole company here, isn't there? Who is the captain? where is he?" were the rapid questions next put.

"There is an entire company—Captain X—is the captain—he is sitting in that redoubt, sir," were my immediate answers.

"Sitting in that redoubt! What is he doing there? Hark ye, sir," added he, addressing our finger-post of an ensign, "you have long legs; step out then quickly—go to that redoubt, and bring back Captain X—here instantly. Stoop, sir—stoop low—lower, I tell you, or you'll not have a head left on your shoulders."

The intrepid Kerryman strode along, but cared nothing for the general's caution, and scorned the shelter of gabions or fascines. When he came to the redoubt, he summoned out the captain, repeating verbatim the general's speech.

"What a hotheaded fellow!" exclaimed X. "Go back to him, my trusty ensign, and tell him I am taking a sketch of the first importance; I am proving the engineers to have been all wrong. Tell him the service will absolutely suffer if he disturbs me."

The ensign strode back again, and delivered this message to the general, who was moving about busily, giving various orders around him.

"Taking a sketch! The engineers all wrong! What an impudent scamp! D'ye hear me, sir—go back—tell your captain, once again, that I order him to come here; and if he refuses, drag him neck and heels out of the redoubt, and up to this spot."

"I'll tell you what, my friend," said X, in reply to this second summons, and hoping that, while he temporised, the general would take himself off—or, possibly, that he might be taken off—"I'll tell you what—"

"Don't give yourself the trouble to tell me any thing, Captain X, but come out of this immediately, I tell you again," said the ensign. At this instant his cap, which was visible above the wall, was knocked off his head, perforated by a cannon ball.

"God bless me, what a narrow escape!—how very lucky that you were not three inches taller!" exclaimed the captain. "Never mind whether I'm tall or little, Captain X," said the Kerryman, coolly clapping the shattered cap on his head again. "I'll tell you what: the short and the long of it is, if you don't come with me, quietly and by fair means, I'll drag you out of it, dead or alive; so come along, I advise you."

X—finding all resistance or subterfuge to be vain, stood slowly up and followed the Kerryman along the trench; muttering that "a man's life was not safe a minute on service with these infernal mad-brained Irishmen."

The enemy seeing a general officer so close, sent their missiles towards us in double quantities. One of the orderlies was literally cut across with a shot, and an aide-de-camp's horse severely struck with the splinter of a shell. Captain X—saw all this as he came forward; and by way of ending the business, and stopping the general's mouth, he held forth the little sketch-book, and began some stammering sentence.

"Not a word, not a word, but listen to me, sir!" said the general. "Resume your place here—do your duty, or I'll make you such an example as never—"

Here the general was himself stopped short, by the explosion of another shell, directly over the heads of

the group, and the report was instantly followed by a terrified mixture of groan and shriek from poor X—who clasped both his hands across his breast, and with a dreadful expression of agony in his face, fell flat on his back, almost under the feet of the general's horse.

"Is it possible!" cried the kind-hearted general, his wrath at once appeased. "Who could have thought of his ever dying so fine a death! Well, he's gone, poor devil! He was at any rate a clever, a pleasant fellow, and a gentleman—ay, every inch, but his heart—but he could not help that! Here, soldiers, throw one of those greatcoats over the body of your captain, and bear him to the camp. We could, after all, have better spared a better man."

With this quotation, the general coolly trotted off with his aide-de-camp and orderly, in the midst of a shower of shot and shells. The ensign and myself were too much shocked by what had passed to think of any thing for a minute or two, but the fate of our captain, and we stood gazing after the body, as it was borne away, the limbs already stiffening before it was out of sight.

What was the astonishment of the general, who thus pronounced Captain X's funeral oration, on riding back to the camp about an hour afterwards, to see the identical Captain X—unharmful, unblushing, and unabashed, dressed, as was his wont, better than any man in the army, and cantering his little Arabian pony along the lines with a feather streaming from his hat nearly as long as the pony's tail? And what was my surprise when I met him the next morning!

But this could not last. A significant hint was that day conveyed to him from the highest authority. The following morning brought him (he said) letters, requiring his instant return to England. He set out at once. The next Gazette announced his resignation; and as Captain X—has been ever since an ex-captain, I have nothing more to say of him.

GOLD AND SILVER FISH.

THERE are many kinds of pets, but among them all we know of none more attractive than the gold or silver fish. Alike ornamental to the richly furnished boudoir, redolent with luxurious elegance, and to the humble cottage window-sill where meekly blooms the sweetly smelling wallflower, the crystal vase, or unpretending earthen bowl, in which, glistening with beauty, "sport the silver fry," cannot fail to attract the admiration, and solicit the affections, even of the cold and callous-hearted. The beauty, and elegance, and the rapidity of the movements of the fish, excite our wonder; and the facility with which they are tamed and made to know their master, demands our attention to a curious example of the power of art and perseverance of man in conquering nature herself. All know the effects of domestication and education upon the horse and the dog, by which these generous animals have become not merely useful to man and subservient to his wants and necessities, by means of the physical powers which they possess, but they have even been made to be his protector when in danger, and his friend and companion, faithful alike in adversity and prosperity. But this is not so strange as is the extent to which the nature and habits of these fishes have been overcome. Protected by the element in which they are placed, naturally independent and careless of the protection of man, and deaf to his commanding voice, still these obstacles have been overcome, and the gold and silver fish been taught to seek his aid, and to rely upon him for support. In China, where the domestication of these animals forms a great portion of the amusements of the females, whose habits are sedentary and resources few, a great degree of perfection has been attained; they have been made to distinguish a peculiar sound made by those from whom they receive their food; they even recognise their footsteps at a distance; they come at their call; they feed from their hands, and suffer themselves to be freely examined by individuals with whom, if we may use the expression, they are acquainted. A great change, too, is brought about by domestication in the appearance of the fish. In many the size of the fins is considerably increased, while in others they are equally diminished; in some, the dorsal or back fin is reduced to a few rays, or entirely obliterated, and replaced by a single or double hump, somewhat similar to that of the camel or dromedary; the other fins, too, often become changed in their character, being sometimes cleft into two or three separate portions; while as frequently two distinct fins supply the place of one. But although these strange changes are brought about by the care of man, they nevertheless are not, as they might at first sight appear to be, the result of a blind and uncertain chance. It has been shown that these changes of structure progress in a regular and fixed order; that the same laws which govern the production of all the varieties of red and white cabbage, greens, cauliflowers, and broccolis, from one insignificant weed; the delicious peach from a poisonous Syrian tree; and the numerous kinds of apple from the sour and unpalatable crab in the vegetable kingdom; and, in the animal kingdom, the fleet racehorse, whose eyes sparkle with emulation, and the ambling, slow, and patient mule; the proud hunter exulting in

the chase, and the lowly sheltie, from the wild horses described by the ancients as small in stature, and covered with curly hair and manes; the majestic Newfoundland and the snarling cur, from the shepherd's dog; and many other examples which we might adduce: the same causes which regulate the production of these, so different in aspect from the stock to which they owe their origin, have effected those changes of character which we often see in the 'gold and silver fish.

But leaving this interesting subject, we find the original *habitat*, or place of abode, of these fishes to be a lake situated on a high mountain in China, called Tsenking, in the province of The-kiang, and about the 30th degree of latitude. They seem easily adapted to a great variety of climate, for they have been naturalised in many parts of the world. According to Block, they were introduced into this country in 1611, since which they have become great favourites with us. There are now few nursery gardens—we would particularly mention the Messrs Lodiges', near London, and that of Mr Page at Southampton—or gentlemen's shrubberies in England, which do not boast of small pools of water in which they sport, and greatly ornament; and they adorn many a drawing-room, and more humble apartment. With regard to the pool or pond in which it is wished to cultivate the species, its borders should be irregular, and its bottom clear, smooth, and free from weeds; a few branches of trees may be placed in it, upon which the spawn is deposited. When the soil is rich and loamy, it affords sufficient nourishment for the fish; but when it is of a sandy nature, it is necessary to provide them occasionally with small portions of bread, or of cake made of hempseed. In winter they require little food, being then in a very torpid state. When kept in a room, they must oftener be fed, and they delight in crumbs of bread, the yolks of hard-boiled eggs finely minced, small portions of fresh meat, and insects, such as flies, and small snails. In summer, the water in which they are placed should be changed at least every third day, and much oftener if the weather is warm and sultry; in winter once a week will suffice. It is essential that the opening of the vase or vessel in which the fish are kept, should be very wide and free.

The colour of the fish varies with its age: during its first year it is nearly black, while a few silvery spots merely indicate the brilliant colours it is afterwards to inherit; these spots, however, soon extend, and, uniting, we have the silver fish: it is only in after-life that it assumes its splendid golden hue. The silvery coat does not always precede the golden one, which is sometimes found in very young individuals; others, when old, altogether lose their golden livery; their colour fades, and again becomes silvery; in which state, from their greater size, and often having three lobes to their tail, some naturalists have supposed them a distinct species: this, however, is not the case. In extreme age, the silver hue degenerates into simple white; and when inhabiting a large pond, the fish often attains to a foot in length. The great beauty of the golden and the silver fish, the transparency of their fins, the brilliancy of their colours, and the facility with which they are tamed, render them universal favourites, and we know none more adapted to amuse, if not instruct, the kind and gentle-hearted.

BOOK-PUFFING A CENTURY AGO.

IN the Life of Daniel De Foe, connected with Ballantyne's Novelist's Library, and written, it is understood, by the late Mr John Ballantyne, some remarks are made upon the art which the author of Robinson Crusoe eminently possessed of giving an appearance of reality to the fictitious incidents which he undertook to relate. The biographer suggests that the secret of this dexterity lay in his assuming the homely colloquial language which might be expected to proceed from the individuals whom he represents as relating the incidents, and in his throwing in here and there certain characteristic traits of narration, such as are generally thought to mark the eyewitness. "Those," he remarks, "who are in the habit of attending courts of justice during the leading of evidence, frequently hear, not only from men or women of observation, but from 'iron-witted fools and unrespectable boys,' such striking circumstances as the following:—A horrible murder had been committed by a man upon a person whom he had invited into his house in friendship; they were alone together when the deed was done, and the murderer, throwing on his coat, hastily left the house before the deed was discovered. A child of twelve or thirteen years old gave evidence that she was playing in the under part of the dwelling, and heard the accused person run hastily down stairs, and stumble at the threshold. She said she was very much frightened at the noise she heard; and being asked whether she had ever before thought of being frightened by a man running hurriedly down stairs, she replied no; but the noise then made was like no other she had ever heard before. The poet of the most active imagination would hardly have dared to ascribe such impressive effects

to the wild and precipitate retreat of guilt in making its escape from justice. This peculiar effect upon the child's imagination we might have doubted if we had read it in fiction, and yet how striking it becomes, heard from the mouth of the child herself!"

The biographer then proceeds to illustrate his commentary on De Foe's talent for "what may be called the plausible style of composition," by referring to a pamphlet which he wrote under the title of "The true History of the Apparition of one Mrs Veal the next day after her Death, to one Mrs Bargrave, at Canterbury, the eighth of September 1705, which apparition recommends the perusal of Drelincourt's Book of Consolation against the Fears of Death." "We are induced to this," says Mr Ballantyne, "because the account of the origin of the pamphlet is curious, the pamphlet itself short, and, though once highly popular, now little read or known, and particularly because De Foe has put in force, within these few pages, peculiar specimens of his art of recommending the most improbable narrative, by his specious and serious mode of telling it.

An adventurous bookseller had ventured to print a considerable edition of a work by the Reverend Charles Drelincourt, minister of the Calvinist Church in Paris, and translated by M. D'Assigny, under the title of the Christian's Defence against the Fear of Death, with several directions how to prepare ourselves to die well. But however certain the prospect of death, it is not so agreeable (unfortunately) as to invite the eager contemplation of the public; and Drelincourt's book, being neglected, lay a dead stock on the hands of the publisher. In this emergency, he applied to De Foe to assist him (by dint of such means as were then, as well as now, pretty well understood in the literary world) in rescuing the unfortunate book from the literary death to which general neglect seemed about to consign it.

De Foe's genius and audacity devised a plan, which, for assurance and ingenuity, defied even the powers of Mr Puff in the Critic; for who but himself would have thought of summoning up a ghost from the grave to bear witness in favour of a halting body of divinity? There is a matter-of-fact, business-like style in the whole account of the transaction, which bespeaks ineffable powers of self-possession. The narrative is drawn up 'by a gentleman, a justice of peace at Maidstone, in Kent, a very intelligent person.' And, moreover, 'the discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding gentlewoman, who lives in Canterbury, within a few doors of the house in which Mrs Bargrave lives.' The justice believes his kinswoman to be of so discerning a spirit, as not to be put upon by any fallacy—and the kinswoman positively assures the justice, 'that the whole matter, as it is related and laid down, is really true, and what she herself heard, as near as may be, from Mrs Bargrave's own mouth, who, she knows, had no reason to invent or publish such a story, or any design to forge and tell a lie, being a woman of so much honesty and virtue, and her whole life a course, as it were, of piety.' Scepticism itself could not resist this triple court of evidence so artfully combined, the justice attesting for the discerning spirit of the sober and understanding gentlewoman his kinswoman, and his kinswoman becoming bail for the veracity of Mrs Bargrave. And here, gentle reader, admire the simplicity of those days. Had Mrs Veal's visit to her friend happened in our time, the conductors of the daily press would have given the word, and seven gentlemen, unto the said press belonging, would, with an obedient start, have made off for Kingston, for Canterbury, for Dover—for Kamtschatka if necessary—to pose the justice, cross-examine Mrs Bargrave, confront the sober and understanding kinswoman, and dig Mrs Veal up from her grave, rather than not get to the bottom of the story. But in our time we doubt and scrutinise: our ancestors wondered and believed.

Before the story is commenced, the understanding gentlewoman (not the justice of peace), who is the reporter, takes some pains to repel the objections made against the story by some of the friends of Mrs Veal's brother, who consider the marvel as an aspersion on their family, and do what they can to laugh it out of countenance. Indeed, it is allowed, with admirable impartiality, that Mr Veal is too much of a gentleman to suppose Mrs Bargrave invented the story—scandal itself could scarce have supposed that—although one notorious liar, who is chastised towards the conclusion of the story, ventures to throw out such an insinuation. No reasonable or respectable person, however, could be found to countenance the suspicion, and Mr Veal—himself opined that Mrs Bargrave had been driven crazy by a cruel husband, and dreamed the whole story of the apparition. Now, all this is sufficiently artful. To have vouched the fact as universally known, and believed by every one, *nem. com.*, would not have been half so satisfactory to a sceptic as to allow fairly that the narrative had been impugned, and hint at the character of one of those sceptics, and the motives of another, as sufficient to account for their want of belief. Now to the fact itself.

Mrs Bargrave and Mrs Veal had been friends in youth, and had protested their attachment should last as long as they lived; but when Mrs Veal's brother

obtained an office in the customs at Dover, some cessation of their intimacy ensued, 'though without any positive quarrel.' Mrs Bargrave had removed to Canterbury, and was residing in a house of her own, when she was suddenly interrupted by a visit from Mrs Veal, as she was sitting in deep contemplation of certain distresses of her own. The visitor was in a riding-habit, and announced herself as prepared for a distant journey (which seems to intimate that spirits have a considerable distance to go before they arrive at their appointed station, and that the females at least put on a habit for the occasion.) The spirit, for such was the seeming Mrs Veal, continued to wave the ceremony of salutation, both in going and coming, which will remind the reader of a ghostly lover's reply to his mistress in the fine old Scottish ballad:

'Why should I come within thy bower?
I am no earthly man;
And should I kiss thy rosy lips,
Thy days would not be long.'

They then began to talk in the homely style of middle-aged ladies, and Mrs Veal probes concerning the conversations they had formerly held, and the books they had read together. Her very recent experience probably led Mrs Veal to talk of death, and the books written on the subject, and she pronounced, *ex cathedra*, as a dead person was best entitled to do, that 'Drelincourt's book on death was the best book on the subject ever written.' She also mentioned Dr Sherlock, two Dutch books which had been translated, and several others; but Drelincourt, she said, had the clearest notions of death and the future state of any who had handled that subject. She then asked for the work [we marvel the edition and impress had not been mentioned], and lectured on it with great eloquence and affection. Dr Kenrick's Asclepick was also mentioned with approbation by this critical spectre [the doctor's work was no doubt a tenant of the shelf in some favourite publisher's shop]; and Mr Norris's Poem on Friendship, a work which, I doubt, though honoured with a ghost's approbation, we may now seek for as vainly as Correlli tormented his memory to recover the sonata which the devil played to him in a dream. Presently after, from former habits we may suppose, the guest desires a cup of tea; but, bethinking herself of her new character, escapes from her own proposal by recollecting that Mr Bargrave was in the habit of breaking his wife's china. It would have been indeed strangely out of character if the spirit had lunched, or breakfasted upon tea or toast. Such a consummation would have sounded as ridiculous as if the statue of the Commander in Don Juan had not only accepted of the invitation of the libertine to supper, but had also committed a beef-steak to his flinty jaws and stomach of adamant. A little more conversation ensued of a less serious nature, and tending to show that even the passage from life to death leaves the female anxiety about person and dress somewhat alive. The ghost asked Mrs Bargrave whether she did not think her very much altered, and Mrs Bargrave of course complimented her on her good looks. Mrs Bargrave also admired the gown which Mrs Veal wore, and as a mark of her perfectly restored confidence, the spirit let her into the important secret, that it was a scoured silk, and lately made up. She informed her also of another secret, namely, that one Mr Bretton had allowed her ten pounds a-year; and, lastly, she requested that Mrs Bargrave would write to her brother, and tell him how to distribute her mourning rings, and mentioned there was a purse of gold in her cabinet. She expressed some wish to see Mrs Bargrave's daughter; but when that good lady went to the next door to seek her, she found on her return the guest leaving the house. She had got without the door, in the street, in the face of the beast-market, on a Saturday, which is market-day, and stood ready to part. She said she must be going, as she had to call upon her cousin Watson (this appears to be a *gratis dictum* on the part of the ghost), and maintaining the character of mortality to the last, she quietly turned the corner, and walked out of sight.

Then came the news of Mrs Veal's having died the day before at noon. Says Mrs Bargrave, 'I am sure she was with me on Saturday almost two hours.' And in comes Captain Watson, and says Mrs Veal was certainly dead. And then come all the pieces of evidence, and especially the striped silk gown. Then Mrs Watson cried out, 'You have seen her indeed, for none knew but Mrs Veal and I that that gown was scoured; and she cried that the gown was described exactly, for, said she, 'I helped her to make it up.' And next we have the silly attempts made to discredit the history. Even Mr Veal, her brother, was obliged to allow that the gold was found, but with a difference, and pretended it was not found in a cabinet, but elsewhere; and, in short, we have all the gossip of says I, and thinks I, and says she, and thinks she, which disputed matters usually excite in a country town.

When we have thus turned the tale, the seam without, it may be thought too ridiculous to have attracted notice. But whoever will read it as told by De Foe himself, will agree that, could the thing have happened in reality, so it would have been told. The sobering the whole supernatural visit into the language of middle or low life, gives it an air of probability even in its absurdity. The ghost of an exciseman's house-keeper, and a seamstress, were not to converse like Brutus with his Evil Genius. And the circumstances of scoured silks, broken tea-china, and suchlike, while

they are the natural topics of such persons' conversation, would, one might have thought, be the last which an inventor would have introduced into a pretended narrative betwixt the dead and living. In short, the whole is so distinctly circumstantial, that, were it not for the impossibility of such an occurrence, the evidence could not but support the story.

The effect was most wonderful. Drelincourt upon Death, attested by one who could speak from experience, took an unequalled run. The copies had hung on the bookseller's hands as heavy as a pile of lead bullets. They now traversed the town in every direction, like the same balls discharged from a field-piece. In short, the object of Mrs Veal's apparition was perfectly attained."

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

COLUMBUS.

CHRISTOPHER COLON—better known by his Latinised surname Columbus—was born at Genoa, a sea-port of Italy, in the year 1436. He was the eldest son of a poor wool-carder, and in his early years, may himself, with his brothers, have worked at the trade of his father. His means of education were of course limited; but it is known that at an early age he had made some progress in the study of mathematics and the Latin language. While a youth, he was very fond of reading all works upon geography, and directed his attention entirely to those branches of learning which would be of use to him in the pursuits to which he had already determined to devote his life. He spent a short time at the college of Padua, where he acquired a knowledge of astronomy and other sciences most necessary to seamen, and particularly useful at a time when so little progress had been made in the arts of navigation.

Columbus left the university of Padua when he was about fourteen years of age. Of the events which immediately followed, we have no accurate information. It is only known that he began life in the humble capacity of a sailor boy, on board one of the Genoese vessels which sailed in the Mediterranean, and from which station he rose by his ability to be commander of a vessel. Subsequently, about the year 1470, he visited Lisbon, the capital of Portugal; and while here, he married a young lady of the name of Palestrello, the daughter of an Italian who had been on several voyages of discovery under Prince Henry of Portugal. From her Columbus obtained the journals and charts which had been drawn up by her father, on his various voyages, and frequent narrations of interesting incidents that occurred in them. He made inquiries about the voyages of the Portuguese along the coast of Guinea, in Africa, and delighted to converse with the sailors who had been there. At this period there was no knowledge of any land farther westward than Madeira, the Canaries, and Cape Verde with the islands of that name, all lying off the west coast of Africa, and in the track of vessels sailing from Europe to India by the Cape of Good Hope. The Atlantic, within the eastern verge of which these islands lie, was supposed by mariners to be a boundless ocean to the west, or that it was limited only by Japan, India, and other portions of the Asiatic continent. By pondering on the figure of the globe, and reasoning from conjecture, Columbus became convinced, that if vessels were to sail westward on the Atlantic, islands would certainly be found in that direction, or that India might be reached much more easily by that route than by sailing thither eastward by the Cape of Good Hope. While his mind was occupied by these reflections, he became naturalised in Portugal, and made several voyages to Guinea and the Canaries, by which he improved himself in navigation. When residing at home, as we are told, he supported his family, including his father and younger brothers, by drawing maps and charts. He also lived very temperately, was plain in his dress, and rigorously observant of his religious duties.

As soon as Columbus had completely formed his opinions regarding the discovery of land in the Atlantic, he considered it necessary to put himself under the patronage of some European power, which should furnish him with a vessel or vessels, and all other requisite means for making good the discovery. It would be very painful to recite minutely the steps he took on this occasion. He applied first to the Portuguese monarch, John II., by whom he was treated exceedingly ill. Offended with the little faith with which he had been treated, he in the year 1484 privately departed from Portugal with his son Diego; his wife having been some time dead. Before leaving Portugal, he sent his brother Bartholomew to make

proposals to the King of England, Henry VII., but Bartholomew was unfortunately captured by pirates on the way to England, which he did not reach till his propositions had been accepted by another power.

On leaving Portugal, Columbus betook himself to Spain, with the intention of laying his plans before Ferdinand and Isabella, who at that time governed the united Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Arragon. Columbus arrived at Palos, a small sea-port in Spain, towards the end of the year 1485, and, as it would appear, in a somewhat destitute condition. About half a league from Palos there was a convent of Franciscan friars. Columbus, with his little son, stopped one day at this convent, to ask for some bread and water. The prior of the monastery, Juan Perez de Marchena, was a man of intelligence and learning. Being struck with the appearance and demeanour of Columbus, he immediately entered into a conversation with him. It ended in an invitation to the stranger to become for a while a guest at the convent. Juan Perez talked with Columbus of his plans, and became exceedingly interested in them. He sent for a scientific friend, Garcia Fernandez, the physician of Palos, with whom the matter was industriously examined. All became more and more zealous in their wishes and hopes for putting the project into execution. It happened that Juan Perez was an intimate friend of Fernando de Talavera, the confessor of Queen Isabella. Columbus being furnished with a letter of introduction to Talavera, in which his enterprise was strenuously recommended to the patronage of the crown, he left his son at the convent with his friend, and departed for the court of Castile, in the spring of 1486.

On arriving at Cordova, where the court at that time was residing, he found it almost impossible to obtain a hearing. This he at length accomplished; but it was long before he could make a sufficient impression on Ferdinand or his queen in order to second his views. They referred his suit to a body of learned professors, who laughed at his project, which they declared to be irreligious and impious.

Tired out with waiting on the pleasure of the court of Spain, and receiving a letter of encouragement from the court of France, Columbus departed on a journey to Paris, taking in his way the friendly convent at Palos, where he had left his son under the care of Juan Perez. When his old friend the prior saw Columbus once more at the gate of his monastery, after several years of vain solicitation at court, he was deeply affected. He entreated him by all means to remain in the country. He had been father confessor to the queen, and thought he might still exercise an influence over her mind. He accordingly proceeded to Santa Fé, where the sovereigns were in person superintending the siege of the capital of Granada. Perez obtained a ready access to the queen. He laid before her the propositions of Columbus with freedom and eloquence. Isabella was moved with the grandeur of the project. The principles upon which it was founded, the advantages that would result from its success, and the glory it would shed upon Spain, were for the first time represented to her in their true colours. She promised her patronage to the undertaking.

It was now only necessary to agree upon the terms. Columbus would listen only to princely conditions. A meagre spirit, after years of unsuccessful toil, poverty, and disappointment, would have been glad to secure the assistance of the sovereigns, on such arrangements as their own liberality might dictate. But Columbus proposed his own rewards and honours, and would consent to no other. He demanded them as if he were already successful, and aware of the extent and importance of his discoveries. The court were eventually obliged to grant that he should be admiral on the ocean, and enjoy all the privileges and honours allowed to the high admiral of Castile; that he should be governor over all the countries he might discover; and that he should reserve to himself one-tenth of all pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, and articles of merchandise, in whatever manner obtained, within his admiralty. They also allowed that he should appoint judges in all parts of Spain trading to those countries; and that on this voyage, and at all other times, he should contribute an eighth part of the expense, and receive an eighth part of the profits. These articles of agreement were signed by Ferdinand and Isabella, at the city of Santa Fé, on the 17th of April 1492. Three caravels, or very small vessels, little better than decked boats, were procured at Palos, and orders given that they should be manned and provided with all care and diligence. There were still difficulties before commencing the voyage, that required all the perseverance of Columbus to overcome. It was almost impossible to prevail upon any seamen to engage in the undertaking. The royal order in respect to the fitting out of the caravels was peremptory; but weeks passed, and it still remained without any thing being done. The old sailors who had passed most of their lives upon the water, shrunk from the enterprise with horror. It shocked all the notions that had been entertained so long in respect to the formation of the earth, and the extent of the ocean. New orders were issued by the court, and officers were appointed to press ships and seamen into the service of Columbus. This measure occasioned a great deal of disputing and confusion, but led to no important result. At length a rich and adventurous navigator, named Alonso Pinzon, came forward, and

interested himself very strenuously in the expedition. His assistance was effectual. He owned vessels, and had many seamen in his employ, and consequently possessed great influence. He and his brother Vicente Pinzon determined to take commands, and sail with Columbus. Their example had a great effect; they persuaded their relations and friends to embark with them, and the vessels were ready for sea within a month after they had thus engaged in their equipment.

We now find Columbus on the eve of his first grand expedition, which was to result in the discovery of the American continent and islands. The simple seaman of Genoa, whom the ignorant derided as a fool, and philosophers neglected as an impostor, after years of poverty and disappointment, had at length obtained the object of his unwearied solicitations, and was going forward with a calm and dignified assurance of success. What unspeakable joy must have filled his heart, as the little caravel in which he sailed was leaving the shores of Spain in the distance, stretching forward into that dim and unexplored ocean, from whose shadows he was to reveal new dominions for his country, and a new world for Europe!

Columbus and his companions sailed from the bay of Saltes, a small island in front of the town of Huelva, early on the morning of the 3d of August 1492. They directed their course in a south-westerly direction to the Canary Islands. These they reached; and after spending three or four weeks in repairing a damage in one of the vessels, and taking in fresh supplies of wood, water, and meat, set sail from the harbour of Gomera on the 6th of September. They steered their course directly west. In a few days they began to fall in with what Columbus considered signs of land; such as quantities of green weeds, a live crab, flocks of birds, and so forth; but all these signs of land continually failed, and the crews were daily more and more disposed to murmur against the admiral. The whole of the sailors in the little fleet were a set of cowardly wretches, who had by turns to be flattered and threatened with punishment, to keep them from open rebellion. Provisions at length were falling short, and some of the men proposed to throw Columbus into the sea, and give out on their return that he had accidentally fallen overboard.

The first land that Columbus expected to meet was Cipango, which had been placed by geographers at the eastern extremity of India. This was the name given to the island now called Japan, by Marco Polo, the celebrated Venetian traveller. The most extravagant accounts of the riches of this country were given by the writers of that age, and the admiral was anxious to proceed directly thither. At sunrise on Sunday the 7th of October, the Nina, which had out-sailed the other vessels, on account of her swiftness, hoisted a flag at her mast-head, and fired a gun as a signal of having discovered land. There had been a reward promised by the king and queen to the man who should first make this discovery; and each of the vessels was striving very eagerly to get ahead, and obtain the promised recompense. As they found nothing of the land the Nina had made signals for, the admiral shifted his course, about evening, towards the west-south-west with a determination to sail two days in that direction. The reason for making this change was from watching the flight of the birds. The Portuguese had discovered most of their islands in this manner, and Columbus noticed that the flocks which passed them all flew from the north to the south-west. He inferred from this that land was situated in that quarter. After sailing a day or two, they found the air as soft as that of Seville, in April, and so fragrant that it was delicious to breathe it. The weeds appeared very fresh, and many land birds were taken. The men, however, had lost all faith in any signs of land. They did not cease to murmur and complain. The admiral encouraged them in the best manner he could, representing the riches they were about to acquire, and adding, that it was to no purpose to complain; for, having come so far, they had nothing to do but to continue, till, by the assistance of heaven, they should arrive at the Indies.

On the 11th of October, they met with signs of land that could not be mistaken, and all began to regain spirits and confidence. The crew of the Pinta saw a cane and a log. They also picked up a stick, which appeared to have been carved with an iron instrument, a small board, and abundance of weeds that had been newly washed from the banks. The crew of the Nina saw other similar signs, and found, besides, a branch of a thorn full of red berries. Convinced by these tokens of the neighbourhood of land, Columbus, after evening prayers, made an address to his crew, reminding them of the mercy of God in bringing them so long a voyage with such fair weather, and encouraging them by signs that were every day plainer and plainer. He repeated the instructions he had given at the Canary Islands, that when they had sailed seven hundred leagues to the westward without discovering land, they should lie by from midnight till daybreak. He told them that, as they had strong hopes of finding land that night, every one should watch in his place; and besides the thirty crowns a year which the Spanish sovereigns had promised to the first discoverer, he would give him a velvet doublet.

About ten o'clock that evening, while Columbus was keeping an anxious look-out from the top of the cabin, he thought he beheld a light glimmering at a

great distance. Fearing that his hopes might deceive him, he called two of his companions to confirm him. One of them came in season to observe it, but the other was too late. It had disappeared. From this they supposed it might be the torch of some fisherman, raised up and then suddenly dropped again. They were all confident of being near land. About two o'clock in the morning, the Pinta gave the signal of land, which was first perceived by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana.

When the day appeared, they perceived before them a large island, quite level, full of green trees and delicious waters, and to all appearance thickly inhabited. Numbers of the people immediately collected together, and ran down to the shore. They were very much astonished at the sight of the ships, which they believed to be living creatures. The ships immediately came to anchor. The admiral went ashore in his boat, well armed, and bearing the royal standard. The other captains each took a banner of the Green Cross, containing the initials of the names of the king and queen on each side, and a crown over each letter. The admiral called upon the two captains, and the rest of the crew who landed, to bear witness that he took possession of that island for his sovereigns. They all gave thanks to God, kneeling upon the shore, shedding tears of joy for the great mercy received. The admiral rose, and called the island San Salvador. The Indians called it Guanahani, and it is now called Cat Island. It belongs to that group called the Bahamas.

Many of the natives came down to witness this ceremony. They were very peaceable and quiet people, and the admiral gave them some red caps, glass beads, and a few other trifles of small value, with which they were very much delighted. They imagined that the strangers had descended from heaven, and valued the slightest token they could receive from them, as of immense worth. When the admiral and his companions returned to their vessels, the natives followed them in large numbers. Some swam; others went in their canoes, carrying parrots, spun cotton, javelins, and other articles, to exchange for hawks' bells and strings of beads. They went entirely naked, seeming to be very poor and simple.

In the morning, Columbus sailed along the coast of the island towards the north-west, and in his voyage discovered other islands, to which he gave names. The largest he fell in with was Cuba, which is nearly as large as Great Britain. At Cuba he expected to find a great trade, abundance of gold and spices, large ships, and rich merchants. He inferred that this must be the island of Cipango, of which Marco Polo had said so many marvellous things. In these conjectures he was entirely mistaken. On the 5th of December, he discovered and landed upon another large island, which he called Hispaniola, now named St Domingo or Hayti. Here he planted a fort, and made it the seat of a colony. From this period may be dated the commencement of the misfortunes of Columbus. That great man now lost control over his wicked and rapacious companions, who seemed desirous of plundering the newly-discovered islands, and afterwards of sailing home, to be the first to make known the discoveries that had been made. Pinzon, the commander of the Pinta, took the lead in these dastardly proceedings, for which he afterwards expressed the deepest regret.

After cruising about for some time, and endeavouring to enter into friendly alliances with native chiefs in the islands, he set sail with his vessels on his return to Spain. His homeward voyage was exceedingly stormy; and after braving the most imminent dangers, they came in sight of land near Lisbon, on the 4th of March 1493. Having paid his respects, in passing, to the Portuguese monarch, he proceeded without loss of time towards the coast of Spain; and on the 15th of March, he entered and anchored in the harbour of Palos. The joy and confusion excited in Palos by the arrival of Columbus may be easily imagined. He was every where received with shouts and acclamations, and such honours as were usually paid to sovereigns.

After the first expressions of joy and admiration, Columbus departed for Seville. From this place he sent a message to Barcelona, where the king and queen at that time resided, to lay before them a brief account of his voyage, and to receive from them an indication of their royal will. His reception at Barcelona was particularly gratifying. He made a sort of triumphal entry, surrounded by knights and nobles, who emulated each other in their efforts to swell his praises. He was received publicly by the sovereigns, in a splendid saloon, seated on the throne, and encircled by a magnificent court. On his entrance, they rose to greet him, and would hardly allow him to kiss their hands, considering it too unworthy a mark of vassalage. Columbus then gave an account of his discoveries, and exhibited the different articles which he had brought home with him. He described the quantity of spices, the promise of gold, the fertility of the soil, the delicious climate, the never-fading verdure of the trees, the brilliant plumage of the birds, in the new regions which his own enterprise had acquired for his sovereigns. He then drew their attention to six natives of the New World, whom he had brought, and who were present, and described their manners and dispositions. He exhibited their dresses and ornaments, their rude utensils, their feeble arms, which corresponded with his description of them, as naked and ignorant

barbarians. To this he added, that he had observed no traces of idolatry or superstition among them, and that they all seemed to be convinced of the existence of a Supreme Being. The conclusion of his speech was in these words: "That God had reserved for the Spanish monarchs, not only all the treasures of the New World, but a still greater treasure, of inestimable value, in the infinite number of souls destined to be brought over into the bosom of the Christian church."

After he had finished his address, the whole assembly fell upon their knees, while an anthem was chanted by the choir of the royal chapel. With songs of praise, the glory was given to God for the discovery of a New World. Columbus and his adventures were for many days the wonder and delight of the people and the court. The sovereigns admitted the admiral to their audience at all hours, and loaded him with every mark of favour and distinction. Men of the highest rank were proud of the honour of his company.

All matters were soon prepared for the second expedition to the New World. On the dawn of the 25th of September 1493, the Bay of Cadiz was crowded with the departing fleet of Columbus. There were three large ships and fourteen caravels waiting for the signal to sail. All on board were breathing hope and joy. Instead of the gloomy despondency that overshadowed the leave-taking at Palos, there was now animation and cheerfulness. The whole fleet was under way before the rising of the sun, sailing joyfully, under a serene sky, through the tranquil waters.

During this second voyage, Columbus extended his discoveries, though without reaping any solid advantage to himself. He found the fort which he had planted entirely destroyed, and the men whom he had left slain, their avaricious and quarrelsome disposition having led to their extirpation by the enraged natives. A new colony under better auspices was, however, settled, and the payment of a tribute by the natives enforced. In the meantime, the disaffected and worthless among his companions carried groundless complaints against him to the court of Spain, and he returned to obtain reparation of the injurious imputations. On appearing before his sovereigns, he was soothed by some trifling apologies, and dispatched on a third voyage in May 1498, and in this expedition he landed on the coast of Paria, in South America. He found the lately discovered islands distracted with the horrors of civil discord. The vices of the settlers he had left had produced misery and despair, and the unfortunate Columbus was loudly accused of being the cause of the universal ruin. His enemies in Spain had likewise the influence to induce the dispatch of a commissioner, one Bovadilla, to Hispaniola, to inquire into the truth of the charges against Columbus, and to supersede his administration. The consequence of this harsh procedure was, that Columbus, with his brothers Diego and Bartholomew, after being treated with the utmost indignity, were sent to Spain in chains.

The rumour was no sooner circulated at Cadiz and Seville, that Columbus and his brothers had arrived, loaded with chains, and condemned to death, than it gave rise to an immediate expression of public indignation. The excitement was strong and universal; and messengers were immediately dispatched to convey the intelligence to Ferdinand and Isabella. The sovereigns were moved by this exhibition of popular feeling, and were offended that their name and authority should have been used to sanction such dishonourable violence. They gave orders for the immediate liberation of the prisoners, and for their being escorted to Granada with the respect and honour they deserved. They annulled all the processes against them, without examination, and promised an ample punishment for all their wrongs. He was not, however, restored to his command at Hispaniola, nor was it till many months afterwards that he was placed at the head of an expedition to open a new passage to the East Indies. On the 9th of May 1502, Columbus again set sail from Cadiz on a fourth voyage of discovery. During this voyage he touched at some parts of the South American continent, and also at some of the formerly discovered islands; but he failed in making any important discoveries, in consequence of the bad state of his vessels, which were old and unfit for sailing. With a squadron reduced to a single vessel, he now returned to Spain, where he heard with regret of the death of his patron Isabella. This was a sad blow to his expectations of redress and remuneration. Ferdinand was jealous and ungrateful. He was weary of a man who had conferred so much glory on his kingdom, and unwilling to repay him with the honours and privileges his extraordinary services so richly merited. Columbus therefore sunk into obscurity, and was reduced to such straitened circumstances, that according to his own account, he had no place to repair to except an inn, and very frequently had not wherewithal to pay his reckoning. Disgusted and mortified by the base conduct of Ferdinand, and exhausted with the hardships which he had suffered, and oppressed with infirmities, Columbus ended his life at Valladolid, on the 20th of May 1506. He died with a composure of mind suitable to the magnanimity which distinguished his character, and with sentiments of piety becoming that supreme respect for religion, which he manifested in every occurrence of his life.

The monument erected by Ferdinand to his memory bears this inscription:—

"Por Castilla y por Leon
Nuevo mundo halló Colon."

Which may be thus translated:—

"For Castile and Leon Columbus found a New World."

The discoveries of Columbus laid open a knowledge of what are now termed the West India Islands, and a small portion of the South American continent, which this great navigator, till the day of his death, believed to be a part of Asia or India. In about ten years after his decease, the real character of America and its islands became known to European navigators; and by a casual circumstance, one of these adventurers, Amerigo Vesputi, a Florentine, had the honour of conferring his name upon a division of the globe which in justice ought to have been called after the unfortunate Columbus.

CLEANING AND PRESERVING BOOKS.

A NEAT little work has just been published on the ART OF BOOKBINDING (Groombridge, London; Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh), containing a great number of valuable definitions of the various branches of that useful handicraft. Referring practical men to the publication itself, we extract the following recipes for the benefit of book-collectors and private families. The first is, to take out stains of ink, oil, and grease, from books: "Oxymuriatic acid, or chlorine, removes perfectly stains of ink; and should the paper require bleaching, the operation will answer both ends at the same time; but as it more frequently happens that the stains are the only blemish necessary to remove, the proceedings are given for taking them out without pulling to pieces the volume.

Nearly all the acids remove spots of ink from paper, but it is important to use such as attack its texture the least. Spirits of salts, diluted in five or six times the quantity of water, may be applied with success upon the spot, and after a minute or two washing it off with clear water. A solution of oxalic acid, citric acid, or tartaric acid, is attended with the least risk, and may be applied upon the paper and plates without fear of damage. These acids taking out writing ink, and not touching the printing, can be used for restoring books where the margins have been written upon, without attacking the text.

When the paper is disfigured with stains of iron, it may be perfectly restored by applying a solution of sulphuretted potash, and afterwards one of oxalic acid. The sulphuretted extracts from the iron, part of its oxygen, and renders it soluble in the diluted acids.

The most simple, but at the same time very effectual method of erasing spots of grease, wax, oil, or any other fat substance, is by washing the part with ether, and placing it between white blotting-paper. Then with a hot iron press above the parts stained, and the defect will be speedily removed. In many cases, where the stains are not bad, rectified spirits of wine will be found to answer the purpose.

Imison, in his Elements of Science, gives the following receipt for taking out spots of grease, and which has been very generally adopted. "After having gently warmed the paper that is stained with grease, take out as much as possible by means of blotting-paper, then dip a small brush in the essential oil of turpentine, heated almost to ebullition, and draw it gently over both sides of the paper, which must be carefully kept warm. This operation must be repeated as many times as the quantity of the fat body imbibed by the paper, or the thickness of the paper, may render necessary. When the greasy substance is entirely removed, recourse may be had to the following method to restore the paper to its former whiteness, which is not completely restored by the first process. Dip another brush in highly rectified spirit of wine, and draw it in like manner over the place which was stained, and particularly round the edges, to remove the border that would still present a stain. By employing these means with proper caution, the spot will totally disappear, the paper will resume its original whiteness, and if the process has been employed on a part written with common ink, or printed with printers' ink, it will experience no alteration."

The following is the mode recommended to destroy worms, or to prevent them from injuring books:—"There is a small insect, *Aglossa pinguinalis*, that deposits its larvæ in books in the autumn, especially in the leaves nearest the cover. These gradually produce a kind of mites, doing the binding no little injury. But the little wood-boring beetles, *Anobium pertinax* and *Striatum*, are the most destructive. M. Peignot mentions an instance where, in a public library but little frequented, twenty-seven folio volumes were perforated in a straight line by the same insect, in such a manner that, on passing a cord through the perfectly round hole made by it, these twenty-seven volumes could be raised at once. The seat of the mischief appears to lie in the binding, and the best preventive against their attacks is mineral salts, to which all insects have an aversion. Alum and vitriol are proper for this purpose, and it would be advisable to

mix a portion with the paste used for covering the books. M. Prediger, among other instructions to German bookbinders, advises them to make their paste of starch instead of flour. He also recommends them to slightly powder the books, the covers, and even the shelves on which they stand, with a mixture of powdered alum and fine pepper, and is of opinion that in the months of March, July, and September, books should be rubbed with a piece of woollen cloth, steeped in a solution of powdered alum, and dried."

ANECDOTES OF AVARICE.

[From Dr King's Anecdotes of his Own Times. London, Murray, 1819.]

AVARICE, says the author of *Religio Medici*, seems to me not so much a vice, as a deplorable piece of madness; and if he had added incurable, his definition would have been perfect; for an avaricious man is never to be cured unless by the same medicine which perchance may cure a mad dog. The arguments of reason, philosophy, or religion, will little affect him; he is born and framed to a sordid love of money, which first appears when he is very young, grows up with him, and increases in middle age, and when he is old, and all the rest of his passions have subsided, wholly engrosses him. The greatest endowments of the mind, the greatest abilities in a profession, and even the quiet possession of an immense treasure, will never prevail against avarice. My Lord Hardwick, the late Lord Chancellor, who is said to be worth £800,000, sets the same value on half a crown now as he did when he was only worth one hundred. That great captain, the Duke of Marlborough, when he was in the last stage of life, and very infirm, would walk from the public rooms in Bath to his lodgings in a cold dark night to save sixpence in chair hire. If the duke, who left at his death more than a million and a half sterling, could have foreseen that all his wealth and honours were to be inherited by a grandson of my Lord Trevor's, who had been one of his enemies, would he have been so careful to save sixpence for the sake of his heir? Not for the sake of his heir; but he would always have saved a sixpence. Sir James Lowther, after changing a piece of silver in George's Coffeehouse, and paying twopenny for his dish of coffee, was helped into his chariot (for he was then very lame and infirm), and went home; some little time after he returned to the same coffee-house on purpose to acquaint the woman who kept it that she had given him a bad halfpenny, and demanded another in exchange for it. Sir James had about £40,000 per annum, and was at a loss whom to appoint his heir. I knew one Sir Thomas Colby, who lived at Kensington and was, I think, a commissioner in the victualling-office; he killed himself by rising in the middle of the night when he was in a very profuse sweat, the effect of a medicine which he had taken for that purpose, and walking down stairs to look for the key of his cellar, which he had inadvertently left on a table in his parlour: he was apprehensive that his servants might seize the key and rob him of a bottle of port wine. This man died intestate, and left more than £200,000 in the funds, which was shared among five or six day-labourers, who were his nearest relations. Sir William Smyth of Bedfordshire, who was my kinsman, when he was near seventy, was wholly deprived of his sight; he was persuaded to be couched by Taylor, the oculist, who by agreement was to have sixty guineas if he restored his patient to any degree of sight: Taylor succeeded in his operation, and Sir William was able to read and write without the use of spectacles during the rest of his life; but as soon as the operation was performed, and Sir William perceived the good effects of it, instead of being overjoyed, as any other person would have been, he began to lament the loss (as he called it) of his sixty guineas. His contrivance, therefore, now was how to cheat the oculist: he pretended that he had only a glimmering, and could see nothing perfectly: for that reason the bandage on his eye was continued a month longer than the usual time; by this means he obliged Taylor to compound the bargain, and accept of twenty guineas; for a covetous man thinks no method dishonest which he may legally practise to save his money. Sir William was an old bachelor, and at the time Taylor couched him, had a fair estate in land, a large sum of money in the stocks, and not less than £5000 or £6000 in his house. But to conclude this article: all the dramatic writers, both ancient and modern, as well as the keenest and most elegant satirists, have exhausted their whole stock of wit to expose avarice; this is the chief subject of Horace's satires and epistles; and yet the character of a covetous man hath never yet been fully drawn or sufficiently explained. The *Euclo* of Plautus, the *L'Avar* of Molière, and the *Miser of Shadwell*, have been all exceeded by some persons who have existed within my own knowledge. If you could bestow on a man of this disposition the wealth of both the Indies, he would not have enough; because by enough (if such a word is to be found in the vocabulary of avarice) he always means something more than he is possessed of. Crassus, who had a yearly revenue sufficient to maintain a great army, perished, together with his son, in endeavouring to add to his store. In the fable of Midas, the poet had exhibited a complete character, if Midas, instead of renouncing the gift which the god had bestowed on him, had chosen to die in the act of creating gold.

Column for the Dogs.

MY DEAR LITTLE BOYS—I am glad to learn that what I said a few weeks ago regarding the formation of opinions in early life, has not been without its effect upon some of your minds. You are soon about to be engaged in the busy scenes of life, and it is a matter of no small consequence for your future welfare that you should be careful not to do or say any thing that may raise up enemies against you. It is exceedingly unbecoming in any one, but most of all in young people, to laugh at or despise others, either because they are poor in appearance, or possess what are thought odd notions upon any subject whatever. Every one who conducts him or herself with external propriety of behaviour, and is known to be governed by a sound morality, is entitled to respect. It is the vicious which are alone to be shunned: the virtuous, though clothed in rags, are in all cases deserving of our esteem.

In exercising this amiable spirit of conciliation, which in the language of Christianity is called CHARITY, you will be sure to win favour and make friends; where those who pursue an opposite line of conduct will gain nothing but hatred and enemies. I would beg to warn you in a particular manner against the practice of scoffing at any thing connected with the religious observances and opinions of your fellow-creatures. Here you are loudly called upon to exercise the excellent gift of charity; for unhappily there has ever been, upon this subject, too much acrimony and want of forbearance one towards another. Your chief object ought to be so to adorn your own life with the practice of virtue, as to afford no room for others to call in question your integrity. Remember it is not by a wordy and specious pretension to an adherence to this or that form, and a contemptuous sneering at the modes of faith of others, that you will be able to appease your conscience when the period of calm reflection comes at last; it is by solid unimpeachable behaviour, by practical worth, in the same manner that a tree is entitled to obtain a good or bad character only by the fruits which it is seen to bear. I could not, I believe, better illustrate these simple advices than by telling you the following story from a book, which I have already recommended your papas to purchase for your use, namely, "Minor Morals, by John Bowring," published by Whittaker and Co., London. It is a capital little book for families.

The author thus commences:—"There was a very droll dispute at school to-day, papa!" said George; "one boy insisted that a Latin verse was written one way in the original, another declared it was written another way: the quarrel became so hot that we expected it would have ended in blows; when one of the bigger boys recommended that each should bring his book: and it was found that each had quoted the passage correctly from his own copy, but they had different editions, and the text was different."

"It was," said Mr Howard, "only a small display of that intolerance of which there are too many great exhibitions in the world. Each boy thought himself right, and had good reason for thinking so; but there was not the same reason for thinking the other wrong. He had seen his own book with his own eyes, and had, therefore, very sufficient evidence for himself; but he could not know what evidence the other had had. Hence the folly of expecting every body to think as we think. They will think as we think, if the same reasons are given to them, and if those reasons influence them as they influence us. If they have other reasons unknown to us, or if our reasons appear to them not to warrant our opinions, they cannot think as we think; it is impossible, and there is no help for it. But what ought to be helped, and ought to be avoided, is our attempting to punish others because they do not see as we see, or think as we think. This is persecution."

"When I was in Lisbon, I was accompanied by a monk to the church of St Anthony. You have heard, perhaps, that the armoiral bearings of that beautifully-situated city are a vessel dismasted, but guided through the waters by two crows, one seated on the prow and the other on the stern of the ship. The device is in honour of a miracle said to have been wrought in favour of St Anthony, the patron saint of the Tagus, who, when at sea—some hundreds of years ago—sailing on a mission to the heathen, fancied himself lost: for all the crew of the vessel in which he sailed had perished of plague, and he was left, wholly ignorant of navigation, to the mercy of the waves. In his despair, he knelt down to pray, when he saw two black-pinioned birds descend from heaven, one of which seized the rudder, and the other perched on the bow of the ship: by these he was safely conducted to Portugal. And among the majority of the Portuguese there is no more doubt of the miracle than of the ordinary events of which they have been witnesses themselves." "Did you believe the story, papa?" inquired Edith.

"By no means: though I never said any thing which should show that I felt contempt for the credulity of the Portuguese."

"Come," said the monk; "come with me and I will give you such evidence as shall be irresistible." We walked together under the magnificent arches of the church—between avenues of pillars, on many of which the miracles of the saint were recorded, and

we reached a narrow staircase at the foot of the tower. "Follow me," said the monk. I ascended after him the long, long-winding stone steps, the darkness of the way being only lighted by distant gleams which broke through the narrow interstices left in the thick walls; and on reaching the top, the monk pointed out a huge cage—it was as large as an ordinary sized room—in which were two enormous black crows, gravely seated on a metal bar. "Look there, Senhor," said the monk, and bowed his head reverently before the crows; "those are the identical birds which brought St Anthony hither. And do you doubt the miracle now?"

"I doubted, and did not doubt the less in consequence of what I saw. And why did I doubt, Edith?"

"I suppose, papa, because you did not think they were the *real* crows that brought St Anthony to Lisbon."

"Even so, my love; and I did not believe that St Anthony had been brought to Lisbon by crows at all; and the attempt to convince me that the two crows were still living, and had lived for many hundreds of years, was one difficulty more to believe, and not one difficulty less."

"The monk's reasoning was what logicians call 'begging the question.' He took for granted, the very thing to be proved, that St Anthony had been escorted by the crows, and then fancied that his telling me the crows I saw were the real crows, was to weigh down all my experience of the habits of the animal, all my knowledge of natural history, and the very natural reflection, that it was much more likely there should be a succession of crows provided by the monk and his brethren, as the old ones died, than that a perpetual miracle should be wrought in order to prove the truth of a very improbable story."

"And did you not tell him, papa, that you could look through the whole of the imposture?" said George. "Did you not tell him that he was a rogue, and that you were not to be duped by his roguery?"

"Softly, my impatient boy; that would neither have been prudent nor courteous; it would have done neither me, nor him, nor any body any good. No good to me, for I should have been exposed to some danger; the monk would have looked upon me with hatred, because my expression of incredulity would have implied contempt for his opinions, or distrust of his honesty and veracity; it would have done him no good, for it was his interest to persist in the fraud, and as to the facts of the case, he knew more about them than I did; and no good to anybody else, for nobody else was present. But it may do good now to you and to others, for to others you may tell the story, as I may tell it to others. My purpose in telling the story was not to excite your scorn or dislike towards the monk, who, though he could not believe, against the knowledge he had, that those identical crows really escorted St Anthony up the Tagus, may have believed that St Anthony was escorted by crows. I did not wish you to be angry with the monk, or the monk's tale, but I wished to ask you two questions. If I had really desired and tried to believe the story, could I have done so, in spite of myself?"

"No, indeed, papa, that would have been impossible," said all the children at once; "you would not have been so foolish."

"And if I could not have believed it, even though I wished to believe it, could I do so because the monk, or any other person, wished me to believe it?"

"Oh, no! no!" they all repeated again and again. "Well, then, my children, the lesson I wished to teach you is this:—Never be angry with any person, merely because his opinion is not your opinion; never be angry because you cannot persuade him to change his opinion; and, above all, never do him an injury, or hesitate about doing him a good, because his opinions and yours are different. Nobody can believe what he likes, however he may try to do so; at all events, if he hears all that is to be said on all sides of a question. Still less can any body believe according to the likings of others. In your conduct to others, be guided by the rule that you should never cause useless pain. In the minds of the best men there is, always has been, and always, perhaps, will be, much difference of opinion as to what is true, but every body knows and feels what is kind, and truth itself is most likely to be found when it is sought for by tolerance and benevolence."

SUPPER AGAINST DINNER.

I have often thought (says Dr Kitchener) to draw up a memorial in the behalf of SUPPER against DINNER, setting forth—that the said Dinner has made several unjustifiable encroachments on the said Supper, and entered very far upon his frontiers; indeed, that he has banished him entirely out of several families, and in all, has driven him from his head-quarters, and forced him to make his retreat into the hours of midnight; and, in short, that he is now in danger of losing his character for ever, by being compelled, in self-defence, to make similar unreasonable encroachments upon the territories of his ancient neighbour and old friend Breakfast.

The gentleman who dines the latest is, in our street, esteemed the greatest; But surely, greater than them all is he who never dines at all.

A wag on being told it was the fashion to dine later and later every day, said, "He supposed it would end at last in not dining till to-morrow!"

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND.

The stately Homes of England,
How beautiful they stand!
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land.
The deer across their greenward bound
Through shade and sunny gleam,
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The merry Homes of England!
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet, in the ruddy light!
There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told,
Or lips move tunelessly along
Some glorious page of old.

The blessed Homes of England!
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath-hours!
Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bell's chime
Floats through their woods at morn;
All other sounds, in that still time,
Of breeze and leaf are born.

The cottage Homes of England!
By thousands on her plains,
They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
And round the hamlet-fanes.
Through glowing orchards forth they peep,
Each from his nook of leaves,
And fearless there they lowly sleep,
As the bird beneath the eaves.

The free, fair Homes of England!
Long, long, in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall!
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God!

MRS HEMANS.

GASTEN, MARQUIS DE RENTY.

This nobleman was a soldier and a Christian, and had a peculiar felicity in reconciling the seeming opposition betwixt two different characters. He had a command in the French army, and had the misfortune to receive a challenge from a person of distinction in the same service. The marquis returned for answer by the person that brought the challenge, that he was ready to convince the gentleman that he was in the wrong, and if he could not satisfy him, he was ready to ask his pardon. The other, not satisfied with this answer, insisted upon his meeting him with his sword, to which he sent this answer: "That he was resolved not to do it, since God and the king had forbidden it; otherwise he would have him know that all the endeavours he had used to pacify him did not proceed from any fear of him, but of his Creator, and his displeasure; that he should go every day about his usual business; and if he did assault him, he would make him repent it." The angry man, not able to provoke him to a duel, and meeting him one day by chance, drew his sword and attacked him, who soon wounded and disarmed both him and his second, with the assistance of a servant that attended him: but then did this truly worthy nobleman show the difference betwixt a brutish and a true courage, for he led them to his tent, refreshed them with wine and cordials, caused their wounds to be dressed, and their swords to be restored to them; then dismissed them with Christian and friendly advice, and was never heard to mention the affair afterwards to his nearest friends. It was a usual saying of his, "That there was more true courage and generosity in bearing and forgiving an injury for the love of virtue, than in requiting it with another: in suffering rather than revenging; because the thing was much more difficult: that bulls and bears had courage enough, but it was a brutish courage; whereas ours should be such as should become reasonable creatures and Christians."

JACK OF HYLTON.

The following service is due, and has been observed ever since the year 930, from the Lord of Essington to the Lord of Hylton; namely, that the Lord of the Manor of Essington shall bring a goose every new-year's-day, and drive it round the fire in the hall of Hylton Castle at least three times, whilst Jack of Hylton (Jack of Hylton is a small hollow brass image or idol, alias an æliple of Saxon origin) is blowing the fire. After the Lord of Essington has so driven the goose round the fire whilst the image blows it, he carries it into the kitchen at Hylton, and delivers it to the cook, who having killed and dressed it, the Lord of Essington, by way of farther "suit and service," carries it himself to the table of the Lord Paramount of Hylton and Essington, and receives a dish of meat from the said Lord of Hylton's table for his own mess.

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